

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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USIE-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3757

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 2369

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GY

SUBJECT: PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION ON CUBANA AIR CRASH

REF: GEORGETOWN 2350

SUMMARY: GOG PASSES MODERATE RESOLUTION CONDEMNING
SABOTAGE OF CUBANA AIRLINER. STRONG ANTI-U.S. CONDEMNATORY
AMENDMENT INTRODUCED BY PPP (JAGAN) DEFEATED. BURNHAM CALLS
FOR NATIONAL UNITY TO DEFEAT TERRORISM AND DESTABILIZATION
AND REITERATED GOG INTENTION NOT TO SWERVE FROM ROAD TO
SOCIALISM. PM DOES NOT DIRECTLY MENTION U.S. FONMIN CALLS
FOR INCREASED VIGILANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY AND WELCOMED ESTABLISH-
MENT OF FEDERAL GRAND JURY IN MIAMI. END SUMMARY.

1. IN A SPECIAL SESSION NOVEMBER 24, PARLIAMENT
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION DENOUNCING THE OCTOBER 6
"SABOTAGE" OF A CUBANA AIRLINER AND REAFFIRMING THE
RIGHTS OF SOVEREIGN STATES TO PURSUE THEIR CHOSEN
COURSE OF DEVELOPMENT. IN ITS CONDEMNATION THE
PARLIAMENT NOTED ITS COMMITMENT "TO WORK WITH ALL
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STATES, AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS TO ERADICATE

THIS REGIME OF TERROR." THE ASSEMBLY ALSO APPROVED A RULING PEOPLE'S NATIONAL CONGRESS (PNC) AMENDMENT TO GIVE "UNEQUIVOCAL SUPPORT TO THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT AND TO THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENTS OF OTHER PROGRESSIVE COUNTRIES OF THE CARIBBEAN FOR WHATEVER APPROPRIATE ACTION THEY DEEM NECESSARY TO DEFEND THEIR STATES FROM FURTHER ACTS OF AGGRESSION AND TERRORISM AIMED AT THEIR SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE." THIS WAS ACCEPTED INSTEAD OF AN AMENDMENT PROPOSED BY OPPOSITION LEADER CHEDDI JAGAN WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CALLED FOR SUPPORT FOR CUBA'S DECISION NOT TO RENEW THE ANTI-HIJACKING AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S.

2. ACCORDING TO A REPORT OF THE SESSION IN THE GOG-OWNED DAILY "CHRONICLE," THE GOG AND THE OPPOSITION "UNDERLINED THE NEED FOR VIGILANCE IN DEFENCE OF THE THRUST TOWARD SOCIALISM, AS WELL AS UNITY AND GREATER PRODUCTIVITY." BOTH PM BURNHAM AND JAGAN CALLED THE CUBANA TRAGEDY PART OF A PLAN TO DESTABILIZE GUYANA "BECAUSE IT HAD CHOSEN THE SOCIALIST PATH."

3. BURNHAM CONTINUED WITH THE DESTABILIZATION THEME NOTING THAT SUCH AGGRESSIVE ACTS COULD BE INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL. IN HIS PLEA FOR NATIONAL UNITY, HE CLAIMED THAT THE CUBANA INCIDENT AND SUBSEQUENT EVENTS "OUGHT TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO US THAT THEY'RE AFTER US AND THIS IS THE TIME FOR US TO FORGET OUR DIFFERENCE. AS I SEE IT, THIS IS A WAR, AND IN THIS WAR, MANY OF THE PETTY DIFFERENCES HAVE TO BE DROPPED... AND WE OUGHT TO IDENTIFY THE NATION AND THE IDEOLOGY AS THE MAIN THING TO BE PROTECTED AND PROMULGATED RESPECTIVELY." BURNHAM STATED THAT SIMILAR ATTACKS WERE ALSO MADE AGAINST CHILE, CUBA AND JAMICA.

4. FONMIN WILLS ECHOED THE PM'S WARNING AND CLAIMED THAT GUYANA WAS A PRIME TARGET OF THE CUBANA CONSPIRATORS. HE ALSO REPEATED THE CALL FOR GREATER

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VIGILANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY ON THE PART OF GUYANESE. WILLS QUOTED WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE OF NOVEMBER 22 IN WELCOMING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FLORIDA GRAND JURY TO INVESTIGATE VIOLENT ACTS OF THAT STATE'S CUBAN EXILE COMMUNITIES. HE LAUDED SUCH AN INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE WHETHER "CORU" WAS CONTROLLED OR DIRECTED BY OTHERS OR ACTED

INDEPENDENTLY. HE ALSO COMMENDED THE COMPETENCE OF THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT IN ARRESTING CUBANA SUSPECTS, AS WELL AS THE THOROUGHNESS OF TRINIDADIAN POLICE INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE INCIDENT. WILLS CONCLUDED WITH A CALL FOR UNITY AMONG GUYANA'S CARIBBEAN AND THIRD WORLD FRIENDS "IN THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT."

5. "CHRONICLE" IN ARTICLE ON NOVEMBER 26 AMPLIFIED BURNHAM'S REMARKS DURING THE DEBATE. STORY BASICALLY EMPHASIZED THREE MAIN THEMES: (A) THAT CAPITALISM HAD SERVED GUYANA BADLY WITH ONLY REAL HOPE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOCIALIST SYSTEM IN GUYANA; (B) GUYANESE MUST BE VIGILANT SINCE ALLENDE'S FALL IN 1973 SHOWED DESTABILIZATION COULD CAUSE THIS TO HAPPEN HERE; (C) THAT CERTAIN AGENCIES, FORCES, ESTABLISHMENT AND PEOPLE HAVE DECIDED THAT GUYANA HAS NO RIGHT TO FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH CUBA.

6. EMBASSY POUCHING COMPLETE TEXTS OF RESOLUTION AND WILLS' SPEECH TODAY.

7. IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION PRIOR TO PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSION (NOVEMBER 24), WILLS TOLD CHARGE HE WOULD STICK TO FACTS BUT WAS APPREHENSIVE OF HOW FAR PM WOULD GO. CHARGE TALKED AGAIN ON NOVEMBER 25 WITH WILLS WHO EXPLAINED THAT MAIN CONCERN OF GOG WAS NOT TO LET JAGAN GET OUT OF HAND AND IN THAT THEY WERE SUCCESSFUL. WILLS HOPED USG WOULD REALIZE THAT GOG HAD PREVENTED PUBLIC ATTACK AGAINST U.S. PERTAINING TO CUBANA AIR CRASH. HE INDICATED THAT DESTABILIZATION
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CHARGES PM REFERRED TO IN HIS SPEECH WERE ONLY DIRECTED AGAINST U.S. IN RELATION TO CHILE. HE CONTINUED THAT HE HAD NOW PUBLICLY REFERRED TO U.S. EFFORTS TO CONTROL CUBAN EXILES IN U.S. AND HAD KEPT LID ON. CHARGE REPLIED THAT HE APPRECIATED FONMIN EFFORTS TO BRING OUT TRUTH IN CUBANA AIR DISASTER AND IN MENTIONING U.S. ATTEMPTS TO CONTROL EXTREME ELEMENTS WITH THE CUBAN EXILE COMMUNITY IN U.S.

8. COMMENT: WHILE REPEATING THE FAMILIAR LITANY OF WAR, DESTABILIZATION AND INTERFERENCE BY UNNAMED POWERS, THE MAIN POINTS STRESSED BY GOG SPEAKERS WERE UNITY AND PRODUCTIVITY THAT CLEARLY INDICATE THE OVERRIDING GOG CONCERN ABOUT THE

ECONOMY IN THE FACE OF THE PERCEIVED THREAT OF
DESTABILIZATION. EMBASSY SOURCES HAVE INFORMED
US THAT WILLS AND MFA SENIOR COUNSELOR SEARWAR
PLAYED LEADING ROLE IN MUTING TONE OF DISCUSSION.
JAGAN WAS SUCCESSFULLY PREVENTED FROM MAKING
PARLIAMENTARY MOTION A FORUM FOR ATTACKS ON U.S.
THEREBY FURTHER EXACERBATING ALREADY STRAINED
RELATIONS. ON WHOLE WHILE THERE WERE OBVIOUS
CRITICAL REFERENCES TO US, GOG TONE WAS
DEFINITELY MORE RESTRAINED THAN PREVIOUS
UTTERANCES ON CUBANA INCIDENT.
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